

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 18-24 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 6 and 8 are amended, claims 13-17 are cancelled and claims 20-24 are added. The features of objected-to claim 14 have been placed into claims 1, 6 and 8. New independent claims 20 and 21 are non-means-plus-function and method claim counterparts to allowed claim 18. New independent claims 22-24 correspond to original claims 1, 6 and 8 combined with objected-to claim 13. Accordingly, no new matter is added by the above amendments.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner is requested to consider the references identified in the Information Disclosure Statement filed with this Amendment. The Examiner is requested to return an initialed PTO-1449 to Applicants with the next Patent Office communication.

II. All Pending Claims are Patentable

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 18 and 19 and the identification of allowable subject matter in claims 13 and 14. As noted above, the features of claim 14 have been placed into claims 1, 6 and 8, new claims 20 and 21 are counterparts of allowed claim 18, and new claims 22-24 correspond to original claims 1, 6 and 8 combined with objected-to claim 13. Accordingly, all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-12 and 15-17 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over certain claims of parent U.S. Patent No. 6,229,953. This rejection is moot in view of the above amendments.

Claims 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,084,630 to Yamagishi et al. This rejection is moot because claims 15 and 16 have been cancelled.

Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,614,946 to Fukuoka in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,815,201 to Hashimoto et al. In addition, claim 7 was


rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the references applied against claim 6 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,613,032 to Cruz et al. These rejections are moot in view of the above amendments.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC/ccs

Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Amendment Transmittal
Information Disclosure Statement

Date: October 25, 2005

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